NUMB. XXV.

Heraclitus Ridens.

A Diſcourſe between JEST and EARNEST concerning the TIMES.

To be continued Weekly.

THURSDAY *July* 17. 1718.

Jeſt. (Singing)

Since all the World is diſtracted in Wars,
And Mankind are all in Confuſion,
Nature herſelf ſeems to bluſh at our Farts,
And no Man yet can gueſs the Concluſion. &c.

You take me to be half mad, no doubt of it, from my coming in upon you with a Stanza of this Nature, now the *Treaty* of *Paſſarowitz* and the *Quadruple Alliance* are upon the Point of being ratify'd.

Earneſt. You come up to my Sentiments to a Hair's Breadth: But I hope it will not be offenſive to enquire into your Reaſons for this unſeaſonable Peice of a Sonnet.

Jeſt. It's eaſie for you to make ſuch a Diſcovery without Spectacles, ſince whatever Forwardneſs the abovemention'd Treaties may be ſaid to be in, nothing is more certain, than that ſuch Ruptures are yet in Agitation, excluſive of thoſe that threaten *Italy*, as may yet bring *Europe* into a general War.

Earneſt. You have better Eyes than I am furniſh'd with, if you can foreſee any Thing like it. Our Fleets in the *Mediterranean* and the *Baltick*, will ſoon put the *Peace* in thoſe Parts out of the Queſtion, and notwithſtanding Efforts are ſaid to be in Agitation to prevent the Execution of the Imperial Mandates againſt the *Landgrave* of *Heſſe Caſſel*, and the Duke of *Mecklenbergh*; thoſe two Princes will, in all likelihood, be brought to Reaſon upon the Entrance of the Imperialiſts, and Troops of the Circles into their Territories.

Jeſt. You are wide of the Mark now, with all Reſpect be it ſaid to your Gravity. The Proteſtant Princes of the Empire, will never ſuffer ſo eminent Members of that Illuſtrious Body, as their Two Highneſſes, to be injur'd and depriv'd of their juſt Rights; the one, as a Prince who has a fair Title to the Poſſeſſion of *Rinfield* and the Dependencies thereon, by an equitable Purchaſe, and the other as a Sovereign to whom an unlimited Obedience is due from all his Subjects, not excluding thoſe of the higheſt Rank and Condition.

Earneſt. Hold — you'll ſay ſomething by and by that may endanger your own Liberty, while you are for giving away thoſe of others that

that are allow'd them by the Conſtitution of the Empire. Do not you know that the Duke we are now ſpeaking of, is himſelf Subject to the Imperial Decrees of the Diet of *Ratisbon*; and that the Director of the lower Circle of *Saxony* is no leſs a Man than his preſent Majeſty King *George*, who has lately inſiſted upon a Categorical Anſwer from the Czar of *Muſcovy* to the Queſtion lately put to him by the *Britiſh* Miniſter at *Petersburgh*: Whether he will act in favour of the ſame Duke, and Countenance him in the Depredations he continues to make on the Lands of his Nobility? As for the Conteſt now on Foot between the Land Graves of *Heſſe Caſſel*, and *Heſſe Rinefeld*, I could heartily wish that Matters were ſo made up between them, that the latter might accept an Equivalent in Money, which ſome ſay is now under Debate, for the Fortreſs of that Name, ſince *Popery* is of late grown ſo rampant in *Germany*, from the Defection of the King of *Poland*, and the Expulſion of his *Swediſh* Majeſty out of his Dominions in *Pomerania*, to need any Acceſſion of Strength to it, by putting ſo important a Place as that Town is into the Hands of a Prince who is entirely Bigotted to that Perſwaſion.

Jeſt. The mere mention of *Pomerania* makes me look towards ſome Deſign in Agitation againſt that Quarter. The *Swedes* and *Muſcovites*, who, it is not to be doubted, are in ſtrict Friendſhip with each other, ſeem to be ready to Act in Concert for the Recovery of thoſe loſt Territories, and the Complaint that has been lately made at the Court of *Vienna* of ſome Infractions as to the Affair of Religion in the Treaties of *Weſtphalia* and *Alt Ranſtad*, makes it more than probable, that a certain Potentate has not only a Month to creare new Diſturbances in the *Lower Germany*, but would carry a War into the *Upper*, by renewing his former Demands and Ravages on the fertile Plains, and opulent Towns of *Sileſia* itſelf.

Earneſt. Thoſe are the moſt Enterprizing Monarchs which the World affords except one, and that is his moſt Catholick Majeſty King *Philip*, who has a *Coup d' Eclat*, in his Seizure of the Kingdom of *Sicily*, conſign'd over to the Duke of *Savoy* by the Treaty of *Utrecht*.

Jeſt. A mere Stratagem to ſhew the Delicacy and Fineneſs of the Politicks of the Courts of *Madrid* and *Turin*, and to lull the Emperor and his Confederates into an Opinion, that they are falling out with each other, while they are in a joint Confederacy to aggrandize themſelves with the Spoils of his Imperial Majeſty's Dominions in *Italy*.

Earneſt. There you are much to ſeek again, and quite out of the way to the Grounds of that ſurpriſing Event. Old *Alberoni* is too watchful and obſervant of Matters upon the Court at *Vienna*, to be impoſ'd upon by a more crafty Prince than his *Sicilian* Majeſty, tho' aſſiſted by the deep laid Schemes of his Chief Miniſter, the Matchiavilian Marquiſs of St. *Thomas*. That ſubtle Fox had by his Correſpondence at the Imperial Court, made himſelf appriz'd of the Meaſures that were taking there, ſo far, as to be aſſur'd, that notwithſtanding the King of *Sicily* made a Feint of entring into the ſame Meaſures with his Catholick Majeſty as to the Invaſion of the *Milaneze*, the Dutchy of *Mantua*, and the Kingdom of *Naples*, *&c.* he was actually cultivating a ſtrict Friendſhip with the Emperor, and cementing it by a Marriage of his Eldeſt Son the Prince of *Piedmont*, with the Eldeſt Daughter of the late Emperor *Joſeph*.

Jeſt. Some People go into further Lengths concerning the Conduct of this *unmarch'd* Prince, and in Vindication of the *Spaniards* alledge, that it was concerted between him and the Imperialiſts, upon his Conjunction with a ſtated Number of King *Philip*'s Troops, to deliver them up every Man to their Enemies. But this is nothing but mere Talk, and the Product of groundleſs Conjectures, ſince it is not very likely that he that had been once ſaid to be caught at playing that Game in *Italy* before with the *French*, would venture to act it over again with the *Spaniards*, at a Time when they have a Miniſter at the head of their Councils to whom nothing is almoſt imperceptible; and his own Grandſon is the Preſumptive Heir to the whole Kingdom of *Spain*, and the Dominions belonging thereunto.

Earneſt. Kings are ſaid to have no Relations, Honour, Intereſt, and Glory, are the things they are ever in Purſuit of.

Jeſt. This juſtifies me in my Aſſertions. For, if it be ſo, neither *Honour* nor *Glory* can be gain'd by a Procedure that is the very Reverſe of both; and as for *Intereſt*, it is plain, that ſome-

body

body might find his Accounts better that way, by keeping firm to the Treaties he had made with his Son-in-Law, who was actually in a Condition of making greater Acquisitions for him in *Lombardy*, than by looking out for a Daughter-in Law, that would bring little or no Increase to his Dominions. But we have spoken enough to this intricate Affair, which the more it is consider'd, is the more perplexing.

Earnest. True — I remember a Saying of the late King *Lovis* XIV. of *France*, who discoursing with the Duke of *Vendosme*, cry'd, *I hold my self to be better vers'd in Affairs of State than most of the Potentates now Breathing; but my Cozen of Savoy is the Prince that excells us all in the refinedness of his Politicks.*

Jest. And yet, howsoever *fine* his *Politicks* were, the very Prince that gave him this Character, had the dexterity of Address to overreach him, when he disarm'd all his Forces in *Italy*, and made them Prisoners of War: and his Schemes and Contrivances may not now be undiscoverable by another Monarch, who is said to have laugh'd out *aloud* at the Receipt of the News, that gave him the Complaint of the *Spaniards* taking Possession of *Palermo*, the Capital of *Sicily*, and proclaiming King *Philip* of *Spain* for its Sovereign. But there's a Prospect of fresh Troubles and Commotions even yet elsewhere, and *Poland* that has already suffer'd so much, is again likely to be a Field of Desolation and Slaughter. The *Muscovites* are not to be induc'd by any Representations or Entreaties to quit their warm Quarters, and a Confederacy is there said to be forming to drive them out by Force.

Earnest. To drive out King *Augustus* and his *Saxons* you mean; for if that be not their sole Aim, I am an utter Stranger to the whole Matter, since it is obvious to every one's Understanding, that now the *Muscovite* and *Swede* are going to embark in the same Interest: the former will, in all likelyhood, drop his Alliance with King *Stanislaus* his Rival, and join in concerting Measures for Reinstating him on the Throne of *Poland*.

Jest. Now you are talking of one Pretender, Prithee how goes Affairs at *Urbino* with another? Is the *Chevalier* recover'd of his pretended Illness, or the Condition of his meager half-starv'd Companions and Followers any ways better'd?

Earnest. I keep no Correspondence with either: But the *Post-boy* of *Tuesday* last, tells us he is in very good Health, and that Gaiety is seen in all their Countenances. To which I can add, an Expression lately imported hither, as said, by himself, that speaks *the Air of* Urbino *to agree better with his* Constitution *than his* Inclination.

Jest. Much good may it do him say I, but *Inclination* without *Power* will never do any ones Business; and enough having been said about other People's Affairs, let us now speak to our own, and seek our Alliances in Defence of our selves, who are in danger of being deserted by some of our Friends and Confederates.

Earnest. It will not be a Work of Difficulty to find more, should they do so. The Cause of Truth, Honour, Religion, and Loyalty, can never want Advocates and Abettors, and you may rest assur'd it shall be carry'd on, and that successfully too, without any Apprehension of a Miscarriage from the Defection of some, and Cowardice of others.

Jest. Suppose I take upon me to be High-Constable of all the several Divisions of Paper *Stainers*, and issue out my Precepts to all my Sub-Officers, and Petty-Ministers to bring in their Respective Aid and Assistance to so commendable an Undertaking.

Earnest. It will not be amiss. Prithee do.

Jest. 'Whereas by an Order from the Worshipful the Bench of Justices now sitting in 'Judgment against all *Atheists*, *Deists*, *Socinians*, '*Free-Thinkers*, *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *Quakers*, and all other Enemies to God, and the 'King, and the establish'd Constitution in 'Church and State: I am directed to issue out 'this my Precept to will and require you to 'be aiding and assisting to them in your several 'Stations. This is in pursuance of the said Order, to charge you, and all of you, for to 'Summons the Respective *Paper-Stainers* of 'your several Divisions, to appear before the 'said Bench, arm'd at all Points with Pens, Paper and Ink, then, and there to be at Hand 'and Readiness, to refute all Arguments and 'Evidences to be brought on the Part of the 'said *Sectaries* and notorious *Malignants*, as 'you and they shall answer to the contrary at 'your Peril. Given under our Hand and 'Seal, on the 17th Day of *July*, 1718.

Sign'd,

ROBERT JEST.

Earnest.

Earneſt. You are too general in your Call of Auxiliaries. The Number of *Quill-Drivers*, that are here ſummon'd will be troubleſome to the Court, and we ſhall have the whole Spawn of all the Garrets in the Town crowd in among Us.

Jeſt. Good Mr. Chairman, give me leave to know the Duties of my Office. My Summons muſt be general, though the Bench may be Particular, and make Choice of as few as it pleaſes to call out of them as proper Inſtruments to carry on our Deſign.

Earneſt. You are very Touchy, methinks, in this your new Dignity.

Jeſt. Who can be otherwiſe when poſſeſs'd of my Station? I have known the Time when a *High-Conſtable* has not thought it above his Rank, to make Court to the Widow of a deceas'd Lord. *of Lt Baltimore's widdow*

John Mills

Earneſt. But that Lord's Relict had been taken into his Embraces from a very low Degree, and was advanced from his Kitchen into his Bed-Chamber.

Jeſt. That's too ſevere upon my Lady: Tho' I could tell you of as merry a Choice made about two Years ſince, by a very antient Gentleman, not far ſhort of the Dignity of a Baron.

Earneſt. Such Stories as theſe make little to our Purpoſe. Defamation, is a Trade few People thrive by, and it behoves us, now we are going to ſtand upon our bottom, to act with all neceſſary Care and Circumſpection, that the Friends we have already got, may continue ſo, by our pointing at *Vices* only, without ſetting a Mark upon *Perſons*: Since howſoever unequal Matches may be made as to Birth and Fortune, it's the particular Privilege of old Age to be indulged in their *Dormitations*, and thoſe of the fair Sex have it in their Charter to ſhew their Diſcretion in giving ear to the Voice of Reaſon, that exhorts them to prefer the Conveniencies of Life in the Arms of an old rich Uſurer, to the Pleaſures of it in thoſe of a young Spendthrift.

Jeſt. They muſt needs act *prudently* that do ſo, though I much fear *not* very honeſtly. An old Man is moſt certainly a Convenience, but it gives ſome Ladies Opportunity of entertaining and ſupporting young Ones. But here's another Piece of News come to Town, for you. The King of *Sicily* upon notifying the Seizure of *Sicily* by the *Spaniards*, has demanded 18000 Men of the Regent of *France*, by Virtue of a Treaty between the Two Nations. Will not his Royal Highneſs be put to a Puzzle how to behave in this Conjuncture. Since it may give Umbrage to the Emperor, with whom he is entred with Us into a new Alliance?

Earneſt. No more of your Queſtions, unleſs they carry more Safety with them. A Poſt or two will give us a thorough Inſight into the myſterious Conduct of that Prince, whom our News-Writers in one Article bring to the very Gates of *Milan*, to act againſt the *Germans*, and in another, make to demand Succours againſt the Inroads of the *Spaniards*. It's my Opinion that the Regent will furniſh him with no more Troops than King *George* will. For Aſſiſtance given to his *Sicilian* Majeſty, will but be a means of weakening his Hands from performing the Conditions ſign'd to in the Quadruple Alliance, by Virtue of which he is to act againſt *Spain*, not to reinforce the Armies of a Prince, who 'tis fear'd, knows it to be too much his Intereſt, not to embark in his preſent Undertaking.

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